

Assembly Concurrent Resolution

No. 240

Introduced by Assembly Members Kehoe

(Principal coauthors: Assembly Members Dutton and La Suer)

(Principal coauthors: Senators Alpert, Hollingsworth, and Soto)

May 26, 2004

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 240—Relative to Joint Legislative Committee on Emergency Services and Homeland Security.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 240, as introduced, Kehoe. Joint Legislative Committee on Emergency Services and Homeland Security.

Under existing law, the Blue Ribbon Fire Commission is established in state government by action of the Governor to investigate the circumstances surrounding the October 2003 fires in Southern California and to make recommendations on what is needed to improve and enhance wildfire response and operational relationships among federal, state, and local planning agencies.

This measure would create the Joint Legislative Committee on Emergency Services and Homeland Security, with specified membership of each house of the Legislature. The joint committee would be constituted as an investigating committee of the houses, and its powers would include hearing and discussing the recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Fire Commission, and, with regard to emergency services and homeland security, conducting hearings, making recommendations as to legislation, and forming technical advisory committees to assist it in carrying out its duties.

This measure would authorize the Senate Committee on Rules and the Assembly Committee on Rules to make Operating Funds of the respective houses available to support the committee and its members.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, California is home to some of the most
2 extraordinary natural disasters in North America, including fires,
3 earthquakes, floods, landslides, mudslides, insect infestations, and
4 drought; and

5 WHEREAS, California is the nation's most populous state,
6 home to many of the nation's most desirable tourist destinations,
7 and home to many of the nation's most critical military
8 installations, and as such California is especially sensitive to the
9 threat of terrorism; and

10 WHEREAS, In October 2003, Southern California experienced
11 the most devastating wildland/urban interface fire in the history of
12 California; nearly 740,000 acres burned, 246 people were injured,
13 and 24 Californians lost their lives, including one firefighter, and
14 more than 3,600 homes, 36 commercial properties, and 1,169
15 outbuildings were destroyed; and

16 WHEREAS, On November 2, 2003, then-Governor Gray Davis
17 and then-Governor-elect Arnold Schwarzenegger established a
18 Blue Ribbon Fire Commission representing federal, state, and
19 local agencies, the firefighting community, and affected
20 communities; and

21 WHEREAS, The Blue Ribbon Fire Commission was charged
22 with hearing testimony on what worked and what did not work in
23 the efforts to fight the October 2003 fires, and with reviewing and
24 providing recommendations on necessary improvements to
25 prevent and better respond to such fires in the future; and

26 WHEREAS, The commission, in its report to the Governor,
27 made a number of recommendations and prioritized their
28 importance, including the establishment of a permanent Joint
29 Legislative Committee on Emergency Services and Homeland
30 Security; now, therefore, be it

31 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*
32 *thereof concurring,* That the Joint Legislative Committee on
33 Emergency Services and Homeland Security is hereby
34 established; and be it further



1 *Resolved*, That the joint committee shall consist of 14 members,
2 who shall include seven Assembly Members appointed by the
3 Speaker of the Assembly, four from the party having the largest
4 number of Members in the Assembly and three from the party
5 having the second largest number of Members, and seven Senators
6 appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules, four from the party
7 having the largest number of Members in the Senate and three
8 from the party having the second largest number of Members; and
9 be it further

10 *Resolved*, That the joint committee shall be under the direction
11 of a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson that shall alternate
12 between the Assembly and the Senate from session to session and
13 that initially the joint committee shall be under the direction of an
14 Assembly Chairperson and a Senate Vice-Chairperson, appointed
15 by the Speaker of the Assembly and the Senate Committee on
16 Rules, respectively; and be it further

17 *Resolved*, That the joint committee may hear and discuss the
18 recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Fire Commission; and be it
19 further

20 *Resolved*, That the joint committee may provide a public forum
21 for discussion of California's emergency services and homeland
22 security; and be it further

23 *Resolved*, That the joint committee, in order to assist it in
24 carrying out its duties, may form technical advisory committees,
25 including representatives from the public safety and emergency
26 services disciplines, to help evaluate strategies, provide technical
27 assistance on an ongoing basis, and take active roles in supporting
28 the passage of any necessary legislation; and be it further

29 *Resolved*, That the joint committee may work in cooperation
30 with the Governor and the standing committees and
31 subcommittees of the Legislature to address the level of support
32 necessary for public safety and related agencies to implement
33 essential emergency services and homeland security policies; and
34 be it further

35 *Resolved*, That the joint committee may periodically report its
36 progress and make recommendations to the Governor and the
37 Legislature; and be it further

38 *Resolved*, That the joint committee and its members shall have
39 and exercise all of the rights, duties, and powers conferred upon
40 investigating committees and their members by the Joint Rules of

1 the Assembly and Senate as they are adopted and amended from
2 time to time, which provisions are incorporated herein and made
3 applicable to this committee and its members; and be it further

4 *Resolved*, That the Senate Committee on Rules may make
5 moneys available from the Senate Operating Fund, as it deems
6 necessary, to share expenses of the joint committee and its
7 members, and that any expenditure of moneys shall be made in
8 compliance with policies set forth by the Senate Committee on
9 Rules and shall be subject to the approval of the Senate Committee
10 on Rules; and be it further

11 *Resolved*, That the Assembly Committee on Rules may make
12 moneys available from the Assembly Operating Fund, as it deems
13 necessary, to share expenses of the joint committee and its
14 members, and that any expenditure of moneys shall be made in
15 compliance with policies set forth by the Assembly Committee on
16 Rules and shall be subject to the approval of the Assembly
17 Committee on Rules; and be it further

18 *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies
19 of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.

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21 CORRECTIONS

22 **Heading — Lines 2 and 3.**
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